



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913

PH (517) 373.2413 | FAX (517) 373.5144

www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/allen/

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Contact: Jamie Callahan
1-866-525-5637

Sen. Allen's legislation allowing for a Purple Heart monument signed into law

LANSING – A bill allowing a monument honoring Purple Heart recipients to be erected near the state Capitol was signed into law Tuesday, said Sen. Jason Allen, R- Traverse City.

“Recipients of the Purple Heart award have been injured or gave their lives while fighting to protect freedom and democracy,” Allen said. “While monuments do not heal wounds or bring back those who have perished, they do allow for a public recognition of the dedication and sacrifice of these brave men and women.”

Sponsored by Allen, Senate Bill 764 will allow a monument to be placed in Veterans Memorial Park, which is located at the state Capitol complex in Lansing.

The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the armed forces of the United States who are wounded in combat and survive, and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die from wounds received in action. The medal is specifically a combat decoration.

The legislation was requested by the Military Order of the Purple Heart – Department of Michigan, which will also cover the expenses of the monument's placement. The national organization is seeking to place identical monuments at each state capitol across the nation.

According to the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the honor is the world's oldest military decoration in present use and the first American award made available to the common soldier. It was initially created as the Badge of Military Merit by one of the world's best-loved heroes – General George Washington.

“I'm pleased to see such an important piece of legislation become law,” Allen said. “This is the least we can do to recognize and honor these great soldiers.”

SB 764 is now Public Act 96 of 2006.

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